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DEPT FOR NEA/ARPI, NEA/PPD, NEA/P, AND INR/R/MR

LONDON FOR TSOU
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E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [OIIP](#) [KPAO](#) [KMDR](#) [MU](#)

SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION: GCC AND IRAN, DARFUR, ARAB REFORM, AND
"STARVING" THE PALESTINIANS

GCC and Iran

[¶1.](#) The privately owned Arabic daily "al-Watan" (circulation 42,000) published an editorial on May 8 on "The GCC Countries and the Dangers of Nuclear Weapons":

"During the GCC summit in Bahrain, the leaders demanded that Iran act responsibly towards its Gulf and Arab neighbors, as well as the international community...the Iranian and Israeli nuclear dossier provokes GCC worries of more regional problems."

Darfur Agreement an Important Step

[¶12.](#) The government-owned Arabic daily "Oman" (circulation 38,000) published an editorial on May 8 entitled "Darfur Agreement, an Important Step":

"[The most recent Darfur agreement] gives the Sudanese the opportunity to work toward the advancement and prosperity of their country... However, there must be increased efforts on the political front to convince other groups that are still at odds to join the Darfur peace process for the best interests of Sudan's people and its national development."

The Necessity of Reform

[¶13.](#) "Oman" also carried an editorial by Abdullah al-Uliyan on the same date, entitled "Reform and Democratic Transformation":

"Reform, democracy, and political and media transparency have become the most crucial issues in the Arab world... America's post-9/11 MEPI project prompted Arab countries to start discussing reform, but in reality there was no substantive change...yet reform remains a pressing issue...it will lead to intellectual prosperity, and eliminate many of the crises that exist in [Arab] societies."

Online: U.S. "Starving" Palestinians

[¶14.](#) Oman's highest-profile Internet forum, "al-Sablah", this week carried a thread, beginning May 7, that discussed an article (from the May 3 edition of the UAE-published "Gulf News"), carried sardonic "congratulations" from the General Commander of Dubai's police force to President George Bush for "starving" Palestinians and his "ability to follow the policy of 'long live Israel and death to the Arabs.'" The topic generated 1,921 hits, with 19 responses, all in support of Khalfan's statements.

GRAPPO